

BILLY VS. PAUL

February 8, 2011 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article)

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, which was founded in 1950, is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year. A year earlier, Graham conducted his first citywide crusade in Los Angeles. His web site announces, “Sixty-one years ago, a tall, earnest evangelist known as Billy Graham descended on Los Angeles with a fury. The city, the young man, and the course of American Christianity would never be the same” (“Celebrating Christ’s Work in the Canvas Cathedral,” BillyGraham.org, Sept. 24, 2010). This statement is true. Billy Graham’s unscriptural philosophy and deep compromise has dramatically changed Christianity in our time. I was born the same year that Graham conducted his Los Angeles crusade. Growing up in a Southern Baptist home, I heard nothing but praise for the evangelist. It was not until I was saved at age 23 that I formed a different opinion of Billy Graham. As a young Christian I learned that Jesus and the apostles warned that false teachers and compromise would increase among the churches throughout the church age and would explode at the end of the age. I learned, therefore, that I had to be very careful and test everything by the Scriptures. When Graham’s ministry is tested by God’s Word rather than by the principles of popular evangelism, it fails miserably. Let’s briefly compare Billy Graham with the apostle Paul, the premier evangelist of the first century.

First, Paul didn’t promote himself. He didn’t form a ministry named for himself and didn’t exalt himself (and allow others to exalt him) as something great.

Second, Paul didn’t praise heretics. Rather, he condemned and even cursed them (e.g., Galatians 1:6-7). Graham, on the other hand, has praised countless heretics, including theological modernists and Roman Catholic prelates. This was not done in a corner. Countless examples can be found in Graham’s autobiography “Just As I Am.”

Third, Paul didn’t join hands with heretics in ministry. Nowhere is there an example of Paul joining together with the Pharisees or Saducees or Judaizers in some evangelistic enterprise. But Billy has made this his working practice, and this damnable ecumenical philosophy has spread throughout evangelicalism.

Fourth, Paul didn’t turn converts over to heretics. He carefully nurtured them in sound churches. Billy, on the other hand, has turned countless seekers over to the hands of wolves in sheep’s clothing. As early as Sept. 21, 1957, Graham said in an interview with the *San Francisco News*, “Anyone who makes a decision at our meetings is seen later and referred to a local clergyman, Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish.”

Fifth, Paul didn’t encourage people to worship idols, but Billy has done exactly this. On his trip to Poland in 1979, Graham stood in front of the idolatrous shrine of the Black Madonna of Jasna

Gora in Czestochowa and smilingly greeted the Catholic worshippers who were there to venerate Rome's false Mary as Queen of Heaven. A photograph of this was published in the February 1979 issue of *Decision* magazine, a copy of which I obtained a few years ago from the Graham Center at Wheaton College. By preaching in the Catholic churches in Poland and by visiting that nation's major Mary shrine and not plainly telling the people that the Roman Catholic gospel is false and by pretending that the Catholic prelates and priests are fellow believers, Graham confused multitudes of people about the nature of the very gospel itself.

Sixth, Paul didn't narrow down his message for the sake of gaining a wider audience. He told the elders at Ephesus, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Billy, on the other hand, only preaches the gospel and refuses to deal with other matters.

Seventh, Paul didn't contemplate another way of salvation, preaching that all men who have not been born again by faith in Christ are "dead in trespasses and sins," "having no hope, and without God" (Eph. 2:1, 12). Billy, on the other hand, stated in an interview with *McCall's* magazine in January 1978 that he no longer believes that "pagans in far-off countries are lost and going to hell if they do not hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ." He repeated this heresy in 1985, 1993, and 1997.

These are only a few of the ways that Billy Graham falls short when tested by the light of God's Word. His evangelistic ministry is not a New Testament ministry, but no one seems to care, which only highlights the depth of the apostasy today. (Further documentation for these statements can be found in the report "Billy Graham's Sad Disobedience," which is available at the Way of Life web site.)

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